

CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

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1. A method comprising:  
maintaining an e-coupon database that comprises an e-coupon identifier, an e-coupon expiration condition, and a post-expiration instruction;  
receiving a request to redeem the e-coupon associated with the e-coupon  
10 identifier when the e-coupon is expired; and  
executing the post-expiration instruction associated with the e-coupon identifier.

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2. The method of claim 1, further comprising issuing the e-coupon from an e-coupon server.

3. The method of claim 2, further comprising configuring the e-coupon server through a graphical user interface.

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4. The method of claim 1, wherein the post-expiration instruction is selected from the group consisting of rejecting the e-coupon, fully redeeming the e-coupon, partially redeeming the e-coupon, issuing an alternative e-coupon, and combinations thereof.

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5. The method of claim 1, wherein the post-expiration instruction comprises issuing an alternative e-coupon for a product selected from the same product and a substitute product.

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receiving means for receiving a request to redeem the e-coupon associated with the e-coupon identifier; and

executing means for executing the post-expiration instruction associated with the e-coupon identifier.

13. The e-coupon server of claim 12, further comprising:  
issuing means for issuing an e-coupon from an e-coupon server.
- 5 14. The e-coupon server of claim 12, further comprising:  
a graphical user interface for configuring the e-coupon server.
15. The e-coupon server of claim 12, wherein the post-expiration instruction is  
selected from the group consisting of rejecting the e-coupon, fully redeeming the e-  
10 coupon, partially redeeming the e-coupon, issuing an alternative e-coupon, and  
combinations thereof.
16. The e-coupon server of claim 12, wherein the post-expiration instruction  
comprises issuing an alternative e-coupon for a product selected from the same  
15 product and a substitute product.
17. The e-coupon server of claim 12, wherein the e-coupon database further  
comprises estimating means for estimating the value of the coupon, and wherein the  
post-expiration instruction comprises issuing means for issuing an alternative e-  
20 coupon with an estimated value in proportion to the expired e-coupon.
18. The e-coupon server of claim 12, wherein the expiration condition is an  
expiration date.
- 25 19. The e-coupon server of claim 12, further comprising:  
executing means for executing the post-expiration instruction only if one or  
more transaction conditions are true.

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20. The e-coupon server of claim 19, wherein the one or more transaction conditions includes existence of a characteristic of a consumer profile.

21. The e-coupon server of claim 20, wherein the characteristic of the consumer profile is whether the consumer is a return consumer.

22. The e-coupon server of claim 12, wherein the request to redeem an e-coupon is received from a consumer using a graphical user interface.

23. A system comprising:  
a memory device having a database therein for maintaining information relating to a plurality of e-coupons, the information comprising an expiration condition and post-expiration instructions;  
a processor in communication with the memory device, the processor configured to:  
receive a consumer request to redeem one or more of the plurality of e-coupons that are shown by the database to be expired;  
execute post-expiration instructions associated with the one or more expired e-coupons.

24. The system of claim 23, wherein the processor is further configured to:  
issue a substitute e-coupon to the consumer.

25. The system of claim 24, wherein the processor is further configured to:  
redeem the substitute e-coupon upon receipt from the consumer.

26. The system of claim 23, wherein the post-expiration instructions are to redeem the e-coupon despite expiration, and wherein the processor is further configured to:

redeem the e-coupon.

27. The system of claim 23, wherein the processor is further configured to:

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                  and  
                  apply the discount value to a different product.

28. A computer program product including instructions embodied on a computer  
10 readable medium, the instructions comprising:

- maintaining instructions for maintaining an e-coupon database that comprises  
                  an e-coupon identifier, an e-coupon expiration condition, and a post-expiration  
                  instruction;  
                  receiving instructions for receiving a request to redeem the e-coupon  
15 associated with the e-coupon identifier when the e-coupon is expired; and  
                  executing instructions for executing the post-expiration instruction associated  
                  with the e-coupon identifier.

29. The computer program product of claim 28, further comprising:  
20                   issuing instructions for issuing the e-coupon from an e-coupon server.

30. The computer program product of claim 29, further comprising:  
                  configuring instructions for configuring the e-coupon server through a  
                  graphical user interface.

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31. The computer program product of claim 28, wherein the post-expiration  
instruction is selected from the group consisting of rejecting the e-coupon, fully

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redeeming the e-coupon, partially redeeming the e-coupon, issuing an alternative e-coupon, and combinations thereof.

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35. The computer program product of claim 28, further comprising:  
executing instructions for executing the post-expiration instruction only if one  
or more transaction conditions are true.

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38. The computer program product of claim 28, wherein the request to redeem an e-coupon is received from a consumer using a graphical user interface.